

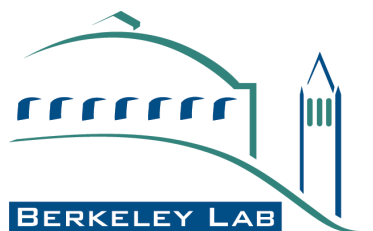


Materials Safety

Integrated Safety Management in Shared Research Facilities

One feature that makes the Materials Sciences Division a great place to do science is the availability of a broad array of world-class instruments. However, this very advantage carries with it the need for special vigilance: while each individual is responsible for his or her own EH&S activities, and each PI is responsible for the safety of all members or his or her group regardless of where they are working, it is the manager of an instrument who must, without exception, insure that anyone using that instrument has been trained appropriately and will use it safely.

—Paul Alivisatos,
Division Director



The Problem—

MSD operates a range of shared facilities that are made available to researchers within the Division, from other LBNL Divisions, from UCB, and, in some cases, from around the world. The major “user” facilities are the National Center for Electron Microscopy and the new Molecular Foundry, but there are a number of smaller shared facilities as well, for example several laser laboratories in Building 2, surface science instruments in Building 66, microscopes in Building 62 and 66. In addition, instruments in many Principal Investigator labs are often used by staff and students from other labs.

Implementation of integrated safety management (ISM) in these shared facilities poses difficulties that are not encountered in dedicated PI labs. The manager of the shared facility is not the supervisor or advisor of users from other groups and there has been some confusion concerning the question of who is responsible for ensuring training and supervision of those users.

A Message from Rick Kelly

The Policy—

Division policy is, in fact, quite clear on this issue:

Integrated Safety Management in Shared Research Facilities Policy:

The individual who manages an instrument is responsible for ensuring that any user, regardless of home institution or group, is trained to use that instrument, is authorized to use it, and uses it safely. No staff member or student may use an instrument in any lab until the manager of that instrument has reviewed the relevant safety issues and has formally approved its use.

Thus, the individual researcher, the supervising PI, and the manager of the shared facility are all, in their own way, responsible for ensuring the training and safety of people working in the lab.

[The manager of a shared instrument will often provide training on that instrument for members of other groups. This is, however, not a requirement, and is subject to time constraints. The instrument manager is required only to insure that all users have been appropriately trained.]